

SR 7 Route Development Plan

Public Open House Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: Bob Lyle Community Center

Location: May 3, 2005

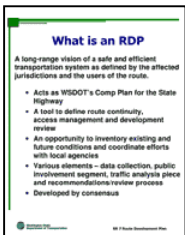
Welcome and Introductions



Karyn Anderson, Southwest Region Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), welcomed everyone to the first SR 7 Route Development Plan Open House, introduced herself and Lynn Hakes, Olympic Region WSDOT. Karyn described the study limits of this RDP (milepost (0.00) at US 12 to milepost (47.0) at SR 507 /Roy Wye vicinity) and that this 47-mile stretch lies between both Southwest Region and Olympic Region, therefore, the study process will be a bi-region effort with Karyn and Lynn as co-leads.

Karyn then outlined the agenda for the evening.

Study Purpose And Process



Karyn kicked off the Open House by beginning the evening's presentation with, "What is an RDP?" She explained to the group that an RDP is a long-range vision of a safe and efficient transportation system that identifies transportation issues, safety and mobility improvement opportunities and ultimately guides WSDOT investment in the corridor over the next 20 years. Karyn also pointed out the following key points:

- An RDP acts as WSDOT's Comprehensive Plan for the State Highway,
- That it is a tool to define route continuity, access management, and development review
- That it is an opportunity to inventory existing and future condition and coordinate efforts w/ local agencies,
- That there are various elements with in an RDP – A data collection segment, a public involvement segment, a traffic analysis piece and recommendations and review process.



Karyn then described to the group the value of an RDP. She explained, that once the RDP recommendations exist they could be included into WSDOT's long range Highway System Plan (HSP) to become eligible to compete for funding. An RDP supports access management and provides justification for design deviations. The study process identifies environmental "red flags," especially those mentioned by the community and includes them as part of the overall study report.

Next, Lynn Hakes presented the route development plan process, how public input influences the process and that it is consensus driven. Lynn explained that the



committee represents many different transportation interests on SR 7 and the community. She shared a list of the stakeholder committee members with the audience.

Public meetings will be conducted during the course of the study to share the progress of the stakeholder committee, and gather public input about the route for their consideration. The Stakeholder Committee, with the help of WSDOT staff, will develop recommendations based on these improvement suggestions. After additional public input, the stakeholder committee will endorse a course of action for improving the route over the next 20 years. This is the Route Development Plan. It will include a list of short term and long-term improvement activities. The short term activities will be forwarded to WSDOT management for consideration and the long term activities will be included into the Highway Systems Plan, where they will become eligible to compete for funding on a statewide basis.

Seth Gallant, Southwest Region WSDOT, presented the traffic analysis conducted to date. He pointed out that the intersections of SR 12, SR 508, Mineral Rd. S. and Mineral Rd. N. with SR 7 have been studied, and that current traffic counts were also analyzed. He used conservative growth rate based on historic traffic data (1.5% annual growth rate at SR 7 and US 12 and 1% annual growth rate on the rest of the segment) to adjust traffic counts to year 2030. A forecast year of 2030 is used to be consistent with other regional plans and ensure that improvements will work in the future.

Improving safety is an important driving factor of traffic analysis. Accident data was analyzed and two existing safety projects, already identified in the Highway System Plan were identified. Seth suggested that some of the areas of concern in Morton might be good sites for Context Sensitive Solutions.

Lynn then defined Context Sensitive Solutions as “how a highway fits into your community”. WSDOT takes into account a community’s aesthetic and environmental values. We work with the community to try to make sure that the highway fits into their plans and that our construction schedules are compatible with community events. The outcome of the process should ensure that the highway is safe for the user and the community.

Lynn added that applying context sensitive designs doesn’t mean that the department always has extra money for things beyond our standard design. But sometimes the department can incorporate the local agency’s wishes into their plans or extend project limits to coordinate with local agencies.

Likes and Dislikes Workshop

The audience participated in a “likes and dislikes” workshop. The purpose of the exercise was to get the public to help build a more realistic picture of the route. The audience split into three groups (groups A, B and C) and joined staff to discuss their likes and dislikes regarding SR 7.

Group A

Likes

- Scenic
- SR 7 good for trucks

Dislikes

- Narrow shoulders – no place to pull over if you break down
- Need faster, earlier snow removal
- Move speed reduction sign to MP 2
- Need guardrail at MP 2 (area with high number of cars in the ditch or over the bank)
- MP 3 needs pull over area for trucks and RVs for passing (across from Lindberg houses)
- MP 2.5 to MP 3.5 used to be a double yellow line (no passing), now single line. Need to go back to double yellow line. All houses need to back out onto highway, need no passing in this vicinity.
- The bridge at MP 2.5 is called the “head-on collision bridge” (worst spot on whole highway)
- Icy - need guardrail and chain-up area on decline vicinity MP 14 – MP 15
- Real icy all day November to March MP 13 – MP 15
- Shady, no sun to mitigate icy conditions MP 14 – MP 15
- Sweeping at Fire Camp (MP 2) Shady, icy – cars slide off the road
- Corners from MP 1.5 to MP 2.5, Road slopes so that it “pulls you off the road” when icy
- Need truck lane for southbound traffic on hill (MP 14)
- Need truck lane at MP 5 past resort to MP 7
- Water collects on northbound lane at Coal Creek Bridge
- Need to culvert ditches to remove bulkheads on the entire route
- Hydroplane problem on bridge (next after main river bridge near Elbe) water collects on both lanes
- Need no passing zone and “children at play” sign MP 2.5 to MP 3 (kids crossing to homes on both sides)
- Parking on shoulder of road in front of homes located between MP 2.5 to MP 3 obscures view, shrubbery also obscures view
- Speeding on straight-away MP 2.5 to MP 3.5
- Summer congestion (March through October) is very heavy – can’t get out of driveway.
- For SR 7 and US 12, combination of tourists and trucks bad, pedestrians and cars can’t cross
- SR 7 – US 12 intersection vision impairment. Cars on SR 7 trying to turn either east or west have a hard time getting onto US 12 due to a visual impairment of the vehicles traveling east to west on US 12. The line of vehicles turning onto SR 7 from the east obscures the driver’s vision of the cars passing from east to west, on US 12. Group feels the road eastward bound on US 12 “dips” down.

- Turning left onto Westlake from SR 7 is almost impossible, especially at 3p.m. when school lets out – people detour onto city streets to avoid this intersection. Fairhart Way becomes a detour road for folks that live outside of town. They use this road to connect to other city streets – avoiding SR 7.
- Trucks are using Fairhart Way as a short cut to the new log yard recently moved from Tubafor. Fairhart Way was built for the trucks with the intention to keep them out of the downtown area.
- MP 5 sign is missing – need replacement
- MP 4.5 has residential in area and it is difficult to pull into traffic because the guardrail is in the way and we have to pull onto SR 7 facing oncoming traffic.
- Log trucks speeding anywhere on the route
- From MP 3 – no shoulder into town
- Need caution signs and wider shoulders
- Bike friendly or bike route would be nice – widen shoulders
- Guardrails are a good thing, but slowing speed limit MP 1.5 to MP 3.5 would eliminate need for guardrails as an alternative
- Need to improve pavement markings and signs
- Need school bus stop signs and pullouts
- Brush between MP 1.5 to MP 3.5 is hard to see around

Group B

Likes

- Beautiful
- Rural feel

Dislikes

- People drive too fast
- No passing lane at MP 2.5 – MP 3 (Lindberg)
- Icy roads – need warning signs
- Uncertain of property being sold back
- Dangerous curves
- Lack of guardrail at MP 2.5
- Murray Road intersection is dangerous – poor sight distance
- Need more law enforcement (MP 2.5 – MP 3.5 especially)
- Need school bus stop sign at MP 3 (Lindberg)
- Need better access for locals
- Old road, deteriorating condition
- Accidents occur that are not reported
- Shoulders too narrow for pedestrians and bicycles
- Need to treat like a residential area
- No area for school bus turn-around at MP 2.5 to MP 3.5

Group C

Likes

- Scenic
- Two-lane facility
- Rural nature
- Tree removal helped with icing conditions

Dislikes

- No warning about new speed limit reduction just north of Morton city limits
- Narrow bridge at Cold Creek
- Blue garbage cans from automated garbage collection left at curb all week
- Logging trucks in a hurry
- Back-ups at the intersection of SR 7 and SR 508
- Congestion at SR 7 and SR 508 – limited sight distance, can't see traffic
- Drop-offs (steep embankments)
- No shoulders
- No guardrail
- Bussing children in icy conditions
- Shoulders too narrow for recovery zone
- No passing lane near divide
- No truck pullouts
- Weigh station off Davis Lake Road, trucks proceed into Morton on Davis Lake Road
- Trucks conflict with trains on Fairhart
- Limited sight distance at Murray Road
- Headed northbound on SR 7, dangerous left turn onto Pleasant Valley Road
- Trucks use jake brakes
- Ice and snow in the summit (divide) area

Lynn and Karyn presented a summary of the groups likes and dislikes at the end of the exercise.

Wrap Up and Next Meeting

Karyn wrapped up the evening, thanking everyone for coming and providing their valuable input. The next Open House meeting will be held in July and the public is encouraged to remain in contact via the project website.